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Manufactures in their Influence upon Pauperism.

No. III.

LARGE MANUFACTURING ESTABLISHMENTS.

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THE evils in large manufacturing establishments arise not from want of money, but from a want of foresight and economy. The employment requires no thought. The labourers' lives are almost inconsistent with mental action. What time have they for reflection? If they are lost in a moment's thought, their limbs may be lacerated or torn off, or their work is ruined. The husbandman may lean upon his hoe, or, when wearied, sit down beneath the shade, and give himself up to the impulse of his own soul, to thoughts called forth by the life and freshness of surrounding objects; or, if the season have changed, and the rejoicings of spring-time are over, and the sere and yellow leaf give indication of the wide-spread desolation that is at hand, his occupation leads him to reflect upon these things, and to give place to those serious thoughts and feelings which rise unbidden at such times and amid such scenes. Not so with the manufacturing labourer. "With the year, seasons return; but not to him returns the sweet approach of" spring, "or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose, or flocks, or herds;" months and years present one unchanging prospect. Each day is passed in waiting upon the untiring motions of matter, without a moment for anything else; and when the labours of the day are over, he returns to his crowded boarding-house,

with mind and body worn down by his stagnant activity; without heart or strength, or any of the external means and pliances for the improvement of his soul, for reflection upon the duties of life or the claims of religion. He is brought up in ignorance of the great object of his existence; he almost forgets that he has a higher duty than to wait upon machinery, or any purer pleasure than sensual indulgence. In the strong, but hardly too strong, language of a reviewer, "One might suppose that the great fabric of *national* prosperity rested upon cotton; that the two purposes for which human beings are brought into the world are to manufacture it and to wear it; that the proper definition of *Man* is a *Manufacturing Animal;* and that the use for which children are created is to feed power-looms."

Think, for a moment, upon the homes which receive these beings, when their day's work is done. The country cottage and its smiling inmates, poor, but neat and contented, which give such a charm to the simplicity of rural life, — compare this with what must be the habitations of mill-labourers in a densely-peopled manufacturing town. We would not now speak of the dens of Manchester, in which (if we can at all credit eye-witnesses) the wild beasts of the desert would scorn to dwell, — the damp cellars in which no other men or brutes than the lowest Irish labourers and their inseparable four-footed companions will consent to take up their abode, — these we would pass by. Our hearts have grown sick at the recital. They are extraordinary evils, and therefore not proper data for an argument. But put upon the matter the best possible aspect, and what sort of homes receive, and must, from the nature of the case, receive, the common operatives, when their day's work is done?

It is not, indeed, necessary nor probable that it should ever be common here, as among the lowest labourers in Manchester, for six — four children and their parents — to sleep in the same bed; or for some dozens, of different ages and sexes, to be crowded into the same room. But it is the inevitable tendency of such institutions to congregate large numbers into small places, where they can have little opportunity for mental improvement; no chance to cultivate the social affections by an unreserved and unbroken intercourse with a few friends; still less can they enjoy the luxury of solitude, and the moral and religious improvements which it affords.

"The great evil," after all, "has arisen from the separation of families, the breaking-up of households, the disruption of

all those ties which link man's heart to the better portion of his nature; namely, the instincts and social affections, and which can alone render him a respectable and praiseworthy member of society, both in his domestic relations and in his capacity of a citizen, and which have finally led him to the abandonment of the joys of home, and to seek his pleasures and excitements in pursuits fatal alike to health and to moral propriety."

Let any one of us imagine himself placed in such a situation, even with all his present tastes and habits. He might not be corrupted; but how would he contrive to improve his mind, and keep alive his religious feelings? Are we to be surprised that the uncultivated and undisciplined should fail to *make* the improvements, which we, in like circumstances, should find it impossible to *keep*? Learning flies from them in terror. "The pure and holy impulses of religion can find no home with them; but, like the dove hanging with trembling wing over the agitated waters of the deluge, seek a refuge in some more peaceful bosom, and leave them occupied solely by their own impure sensations."

The account to which the labour of children * may be turned holds out a strong inducement to parents to impose upon them the confinement of a factory life before their physical system is sufficiently developed to endure it without great and permanent injury. Thus the time and means of education also are curtailed. The consequence is, not only that children are thus brought up with minds and bodies dwarfed, but a species of hostility is cherished between them and their parents; the parents regarding them as servants, whose duty it is to labour for their support, and they considering the parents severe, interested, and unjust taskmasters.

The daughters, especially, are brought up without skill in domestic affairs, and wholly unfit to perform the important duties of wife and mother. Some idea may be formed of the maternal providence in Manchester, from the fact that more than two thirds of all the children born in the place are brought into the world by the aid of public charity. As soon as the mother is able to work she puts the child under the charge of some old person, who can do nothing else, and attends it herself only when she comes out for her meals.

* In Fall-River we understand that about one tenth of the hands are under ten years old, and in some of the factories nearly one fourth. In Lowell none are received under thirteen. In both these places parents are anxious to have their children admitted as soon as possible.

But enough and perhaps too much of these evils. The causes may be summed up in few words. Large manufacturing towns injure morals; for they destroy domestic labour; they congregate their victims into densely peopled neighbourhoods; they break up families; they lessen the demand for human strength, reducing man to a machine, or rather to the slave of a machine; they place large classes of the poor entirely under the control of the rich; they lessen individual responsibility; and diminish the facilities of moral and intellectual education.

But why dwell on these points, in a dissertation on the influence of manufactures upon pauperism? Because they are inseparably connected with it. Whatever tends to the introduction of physical, moral, or intellectual depravity, tends also to the introduction of pauperism with its most hateful attendants. Whatever tends to produce a class of men physically, mentally, and morally degraded, discourages the honourable spirit of independence, which would provide a competency for casual emergencies, and, at the same time, generates the most oppressive sufferings and evils to which poverty is exposed. What matters it to us, whether the sufferings of a brother man be occasioned by absolute starvation, or by the labour and deprivations to which he is reduced in order to drive away starvation? What matters it to us, whether his mind lose its lofty character, its provident sagacity, its towering hopes, its manly independence, in consequence of the actual pressure of cold and hunger, or in consequence of the narrow and narrowing employments, in which he is obliged to engage to prevent freezing and starving? In each, alike it is poverty that acts. To the cold-blooded political economist, who regards the acquisition of wealth as the great end of human existence, these things seem otherwise. To the narrow-souled politician, who sees no higher object than to save the people's money, these things seem otherwise. So long as no contributions are levied upon him, either directly by the clamorous beggar, or indirectly by the public pauper, he is aware of no distressing cases of poverty. His neighbour and his neighbour's children may be engaged in an occupation which renders existence little better than a living death, — an occupation beneath which the flower of health is crushed, the buoyancy of youthful spirits sunk, the nice sense of moral distinctions obliterated; still they are comfortably fed and clad; and our friend sees among them no marks of suffering

poverty. Not so should we; not so will the philanthropist look upon these things. To his mind all here is the work of poverty, in its most dangerous and insinuating form. To his mind these painful and degrading employments as much claim redress and relief as absolute starvation; and that system of policy, whether public or private, which produces this state of things, is as much to be deprecated as that which brings inevitably in its train of consequences the absolute starvation of a large portion of our fellow-beings.

We do not believe that these evils to any great extent exist in this country. But let it be remembered that we have no large manufacturing towns, and of them and their influence alone have we been speaking. The evil, as it respects this country, is only prospective; Heaven grant that it may ever be so!

We know that it is customary to attribute the manufacturing grievances in England to the peculiar form of government and state of society there. With our free government and our immense room for emigration, it is said, we have nothing to fear. We cannot think this correct. How is government to suppress the grievance unless by suppressing the cause? And if the cause is vitally connected with the establishments themselves, how can government act except by discouraging such establishments? For when once they are fairly seated, when once large manufacturing towns have arisen among us, no arm of public authority will dare to raise itself against them. The rights of private property are sacred. This, like most other evils, will perpetuate itself. The population which these establishments will raise up can be supported only by them; and, in destroying them, we shall take the bread from the mouths of the very persons whom we would benefit.

We can imagine a state of things in which even large manufacturing towns will not be particularly fertile in depravity and vice. If all the proprietors were wise men and Christians, and the overseers of the same character, and, from the commencement, all buildings and laws were framed in a spirit of wisdom and benevolence, many of the evils we have noticed might be neutralized. But these are conditions which we have no right to expect. Such measures would, doubtless, in the end be most advantageous to all. But avarice is short-sighted. Selfishness is short-sighted. Love of power is short-sighted. And, unfortunately, manufacturers, like other men, are too much under the control of these short-sighted motives. Honourable exceptions there are and will

be; but until the character of the world is changed, we have no right to presume that they will be anything more than exceptions.

J. H. M.

The Coming of the Son of Man.

In a former article on this subject I explained what I suppose to have been the *primary* reference intended by our Saviour in the passage, Matthew xvi. 27, 28. This I stated to be "that establishment of his religion in the hearts of men which took place in the life-time of his apostles," and which was manifested in the rapid spread of his religion through the Roman empire, and especially in the signal overthrow of the Jewish nation, and the adoption of the Christian church, in their stead, as God's "peculiar people."

I would now add that the coming of the Son of Man, the coming to judgment, the coming in his kingdom and in the power and glory of his Father, may be regarded as having a general meaning, in which we all are interested. It is the establishment of Christianity in each individual bosom, the establishment of those principles by which alone we are to be judged, and by the influence of which upon our hearts and lives we are to become fitted for another state of existence and discipline and enjoyment. The question, whether our Saviour will appear in person as our Judge, is, to say the least, a doubtful question; one in which it becomes us not to be positive, and one in which we have but little concern. It is enough for us to know that the word which he has given us, the laws he has laid down, the same shall judge us at the last day; that if we judge ourselves, we shall not be judged. These are the truths to which we are chiefly to attend; the form and the manner of the judgment are of but little consequence. "I am come a Light into the world," was the language of Christ, "that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness. And if any man hear my words and believe not, I judge him not; for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth me and receiveth not my words hath one that judgeth him; the word

that I have spoken, the same shall judge him at the last day." It need not be repeated that this judgment of the soul is an inward and a spiritual judgment. The good man needs no outward voice to tell him when to be happy, or the bad man when to be miserable. Whenever and wherever the human soul realizes the presence of the Almighty Father, and feels and thinks and acts upon that reality, whenever it comes to a full consciousness of its sins, and has an earnest and sincere longing for forgiveness and a return to holiness, whenever it sees clearly the goodness of God revealed as in the face of his son Jesus Christ, whenever and wherever it feels the great principles of piety to God and benevolence to man operating within it in the fulness of their power, then and there is a visitation of mercy like the coming of the Son of Man in the glory of his Father with his holy angels. And, on the other hand, whenever and wherever a human soul is conscious that it has exhausted all the treasures of this world in search for happiness, and in that search has exhausted its powers and lost its energy, when it feels that it is destitute of a treasure in heaven, of an interest in spiritual and heavenly things, then and there is the coming of the Son of Man to the judgment of that soul, to reward it for the deeds it has done in the body.

Now, this judgment of the soul of which I speak, this coming of the Son of Man to requite to every man according to his works, may take place in a measure in the present world. I appeal to the experience of each one of my readers, if he has not, at times, in an hour of reflection, felt that some pure and holy influence was operating within him, leading him to look inward into the recesses of his bosom, and to pass a severe and scrutinizing judgment upon his thoughts and feelings and words and actions. This judgment was of course imperfect, in the eye of Omniscience; for we cannot in this world see as we are seen and know as we are known; we are so surrounded and filled up with material things, we have so many prejudices to encounter, so much to blind the eye and to darken the mind, that it is very difficult, to say the least, to tear ourselves away, even for a season, from all material connexions; but that it can be done, and is done in some measure, no one, it seems to me, can doubt, whose mind has been enlightened and whose heart has been elevated by the principles of the gospel. It is the sentiment of a modern English writer, and one which, I believe, has much foundation in truth, "that the dread book of account which the Scriptures speak of is the mind itself of each individual, that there

is no such thing as real forgetting possible to the mind, that a thousand accidents may interpose a veil between our present consciousness and the secret inscriptions on the memory, that accidents of the same sort may rend away this veil, but alike whether veiled or unveiled the inscription remains for ever."

There is one event, however, — coming sooner or later alike to all, — one period in human existence, when this spiritual judgment takes place more effectually than at any other, when, perhaps more perfectly than he can be before, every man is rewarded according to his works. This is the event of death, the period of our separation from the present state, the dissolution of all our connexions with the material and outward world. Then it is that the human soul, disencumbered of this frail and mortal body, goes forth to stand in the presence of its Maker, naked and alone. Then the veil which so often separates the present from the past, the veil of forgetfulness, is taken away. Then must we consider ourselves as we really are. All outward distinctions, all that obscured our real characters from the world and ourselves, will then be destroyed. This, in its fullest and to us its most important sense, is the coming of the Son of Man. In this language it is frequently alluded to in the Scripture. "Watch, therefore; for ye know not in what hour your Lord may come." It is by constant watchfulness over our character and conduct, it is by that and that only, that we can be prepared for this event. The good man, the Christian, in proportion as he becomes good, in proportion as he is influenced by the spirit of his Master, has little to fear in the judgment that awaits him. For in the kingdom of heaven, which literally and properly should begin here in every man's own bosom and extend onward to eternity, in that kingdom the judgment is always going on, whether it be in the present or the future state. To him who has entered upon the work of this kingdom, with full purpose of heart to strive for greater and greater excellence, to him of whom it may be said that Jesus Christ has full possession of his soul, to him, wherever he may be, there is a voice which speaks as from the tongue of the Saviour, "Come, thou blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for thee from the foundation of the world." The good man is in heaven and the wicked man is in hell whenever conscience does its work within them, whatever be the circumstances in which they may be placed. May this truth sink deep into our hearts and inspire us all with a stronger desire for glory, honour, and immortality, that we may enter at last

upon that eternal life which is with the Father, and is given us through his Son!

H. B. Goodwin.

Means of Providing the Cure and Preventing the Spread of Infidelity.

We must begin with an observation we lament the necessity of making, that in the investigation of this subject the conviction has grown strong and serious in our minds that the spirit in which measures to these ends have often been pursued heretofore is a spirit characterized by no mark either of justice or wisdom. Infidelity has been regarded as being always *the same thing*, and as being always *an immense and horrible crime*, as an internal, concentrated purpose of evil, as a wilful and malignant vice of the soul. But so long as it is true that some speculative infidels have been, during the continuance of their intellectual unbelief, actually far superior in goodness of heart and conscientiousness of effort to some speculative Christians, so long this view must be considered unjust. If belief or unbelief is made the grand surpassing test of holiness or sin, then, surely, in all logical fairness and exactness, it must in every case prove a degree of virtue in the intellectual Christian corresponding to the degree of vice which stains the soul of the unbeliever.

But there has been not only a want of justice, but a want also of wisdom. Infidelity has been looked at in the mass, and it has been opposed in the mass. It has not been discriminated into its several parts, detected in its various and ever-varying forms, and traced to its diverse, multiplied causes. Cause, process, and effect have been blended together in one general confusion of view, or rather everything has been crowded into the *result*, which result has been thought to consist in an enormous accumulation of guilt. This mode of viewing the subject has, of course, given rise to much ill-adaptation of the *means* to the *ends* desirable to be effected, and has often caused an entire misapprehension as to the *ends* themselves.

These remarks do not, of course, apply to the manner

in which, *without exception*, infidelity has been opposed. Yet we could not refrain from commencing the subject as we have done, considering the course that has *generally* been pursued, and convinced as we are that the Christian who now presents an apology for his religion should begin with presenting an apology for himself.

We wish also to remark here that in considering the subject we shall endeavour rather to establish the *principles* according to which we should proceed in the great work than to present a catalogue of particular means. We think this course will be the more useful one, inasmuch as it is better, in the *study* of the subject, to guard ourselves against radical error than to expend all our anxiety in developing the character and tracing the results of particular modes of action. In order to justify and establish these principles, we shall be obliged to make remarks on the character of infidelity which otherwise we should, of course, omit.

In describing the means necessary to effect that in regard to infidelity which, as Christians, we should all desire and labour to have accomplished, we shall consider the subject in a three-fold division. We shall speak,

I. Of the means suggested by the character and condition, in all respects, of the infidel.

II. Of the means suggested by the character of Christianity, as it exists in the Bible and as it appears in the world.

III. Of the means suggested by the personal power of the Christian.

In presenting our conclusions on the first of these points we hope that the remarks already made in regard to the diversity of character which infidelity presents in different cases will be borne in mind. Everything we shall say of the character of infidels we by no means intend to predicate of the character of every infidel, and many things we shall have occasion to speak of will not, perhaps, apply to the majority of unbelievers. We remark this here, because, though we shall endeavour to distribute our remarks as exactly and constantly as possible to the various classes of infidels which exist, it is for many reasons obviously out of our power to do so universally.

We come now to consider the means suggested by a view of the character and condition of the infidel. And

1. By what treatment of his intellectual nature shall we act most efficiently against the power of unbelief? The

infidel prides himself upon the freedom of his mind. He is enslaved to no false principles, terrified by no unreal dangers, tormented by the cares of no imaginary world. He is a free *man* and a free thinker. Having cast off all belief in what is spiritual and future, he goes on, in the exercise of his free thought, to form his philosophy of life, to ascertain and detect the purpose of those relations in which he sees the various parts of material, organic, and animal life bound together. In his pursuit of this end, he does not proceed upon any fixed principles, he cares not what enduring realities lie *below* the passing phenomena of the world, he needs no eternal and all-comprehending truths to give strength to his system. All, to his view, is change, decay, and death. The rules of mere outward experience, developing its results to the eye of the accurate observer, these rules, brought together and compared with each other, form for him the index that points out every purpose of existence. His system of philosophy is the strangest of all sensual systems, and, in some of its parts, as incomprehensible as the blindest of all mystical ones.

We cannot and need not here describe minutely the infidel's mode of investigating truth. This can be understood thoroughly only by an examination of infidel books and infidel minds. It seems more suitable for us, at present, to make one or two general statements as to the condition into which his mind is brought by means of his principles, and as to the mode of influence by which we can reach it.

And it is important to observe that, under the influence of the system which he has adopted, the infidel perverts and distorts his intellectual faculties. His mind ceases to be a just instrument to conduct processes of right reasoning and to arrive at discoveries of truth. The intellectual balance seems lost, and the intellectual law broken. It is not so much that he reasons wrongly in a particular case, as that his mind has got to be in its very nature a wrong-reasoning mind. We are not able to see how an honest man, within the reach of any just influences, could bring himself into such a condition; but it is conceivable how a person may be initiated into such principles from his youth, and trained up to become an intellectual infidel, without serious and unusual dishonesty to his own soul. The course for us to pursue is plain. If the particular case in which we are concerned is one in which the heart remains comparatively true and unperverted, we have only to bring the understanding to obey juster laws, by presenting to it such views as shall enable it to see the narrowness of the principles to which it is

now subject. This being done, by the use of proper care on our part the recognition of those truths it most imports man to know will follow. In such a case as the present, where the intellect is unhinged from true and bound to false principles, there cannot be a more hurtful course pursued than that adopted by some, of beginning at once in a dogmatical spirit to combat *the particular errors* professed and maintained. Many seem to imagine that the only thing to be done in case of erroneous views on religious subjects, is to show themselves bold defenders of the truth and stern opposers of what is false. They therefore fall directly upon the errors and their advocates, in all the heat of warlike enterprise, with a flaming spirit of opposition, and in the proud and manifest anticipation of argumentative victory. This can hardly merit a better appellation than that of an unchristian spirit in a Christian cause. But some who are not so much inclined to dogmatism seem to think that the only way of destroying error is by its direct refutation. And as the infidel is forced by them to put himself in a posture of defence, he plants his feet the more firmly upon the ground on which he already stands. There are, doubtless, many young persons who, being brought up under the influence of infidel maxims and modes of reasoning, have become disbelievers in our holy faith through most grievous misfortune. A little care would save them. A little care in illuminating their minds with the general principles of truth would prepare them to be illuminated with the light of Christianity.

Though it is plain what object we should have in view in regard to an intellect so perverted that it beholds all things in wrong lights and judges of all things by wrong laws, it is not always so plain by what particular means this object can be effected. The influences needed will be various, often indirect and invisible. The most important principles are sometimes communicated from one mind to another by a sort of silent, insensible infusion. There is a practical skill in producing the effect we speak of, which a real anxiety for the spread of truth and a true sympathy with the minds on which we would act will do much to impart. There is a mode of gently removing erroneous notions from the mind, by gradually pouring in upon it the truth in the spirit of the truth, like the manner in which in a placid stream the preceding portions of the current are quietly moved along by those which succeed. And when we have prepared the unbeliever to be impressed by particular doctrines and truths, we must be extremely

careful to follow the same rule we have observed in recovering his intellect from its perversion to the sway of just principles, we must still continue to act harmoniously with his own mind. We are apt to be hasty and violent when we have the prospect of effecting great results, and to neglect that patient, watchful assiduity of treatment which should be practised no less by the physician of the soul, than by the physician of the body. We must not assume that summary and almost imperatorial tone which we sometimes hear expressed in phrases like the following, — "Submit to God; obey his law; receive, one and all, the doctrines of his word; give up everything of sinful objection and prejudice, and prostrate your soul before the majesty of truth."

Such language may sometimes be harmless, but, used for the purpose to which we refer, it would but chafe the intellect, violently interrupt the course of the mind, and close the heart forever against us. The mind of the infidel is, in this state, exceedingly ill-prepared to be *forced* into any conclusion; we must carry it no farther than it will voluntarily consent to go; we must excite within itself a warmth which will melt away its prejudice; we must kindle there the light before which its darkness will be scattered and the right path illuminated to its eye. We must begin with the unbeliever's own positions, with his affirmations and denials. There are no convulsions by which we can carry him in a moment through long processes of thought, and bring him to conclusions of which he has never seen the force, and to the admission of which he is exceedingly averse.—Other remarks touching the intellectual condition of the infidel will be introduced more properly under the other division of this branch of the subject, to which we now proceed.

2. We ask, What means are suggested for the prevention and cure of infidelity, by the spiritual character and condition of the infidel? Two conditions of the spiritual nature may be mentioned, in one of which, either by his misfortune or his crime, we believe every infidel is placed. The spiritual nature of the infidel is, though in very different degrees in different cases, either dormant or perverted. The power of Christianity would, in every case, rouse it to a far more intense and noble action, or recover it to a far more exact and constant rectitude.

And here we must confess our apprehension that a perverted heart and a perverted life are the just definition of much of the infidelity of the present day. We should never, it is true, so confound infidelity with irreligion as to

forget that, independent of and previous to Christianity, religion has a foundation in every human mind. There are sentiments in every man which are fitted to the spiritual world, as the wing of the bird is fitted to cleave the air, and the fin of the fish to open a path through the sea. The eye of the soul, if not kept perpetually and hermetically sealed, beholds spiritual existences and a celestial power above it; and it is as reasonable to shut the bodily eye, and then deny that the firm land extends everywhere around us and that the broad heavens stretch far away over our heads, as to close the inward vision to the perception of that uncontrollable might which sits enthroned upon the universe. But when the spiritual eye is open as it should be, when the soul has any of those spiritual aspirations which it should have, when, in a word, the heart is honest, Christianity, if it is at all understood, will be welcomed by the religious principle within, however that principle may have developed itself by its own efforts, and the more joyously as it has developed itself the more completely. This is most fully established by experience, that oracle of truth and personification of evidence to the infidel. The religious man in the soul will cry out to Christianity for support and for life.

In the light of these premises let us proceed to examine briefly the two cases just specified, that where the spiritual nature is dormant and unexcited, and that where it is perverted and debased.

It is needless to dwell upon the situation of those under the first of these cases, who have never been touched by the light of Christianity. We know that the Sun of Righteousness does not yet, like the sun in the heavens, roll its flood of light round the whole surface of the globe, but marks, as to space, comparatively but a narrow circle of brilliancy. If by an infidel be meant one who does not receive Christianity, there are hundreds of millions of infidels. Every heathen is an infidel. And surely the heathen is not a criminal for not receiving what has never been offered to his acceptance. He has an excuse that his spiritual nature is unawakened. And is the excuse of the heathen confined to heathen lands? Let us look, a moment, at the West. The West has sometimes been represented as full of positive, malignant infidelity, as ready to pour out a torrent of unbelief that should sweep away every Christian institution from the land. It is, perhaps, true that where Christianity has seldom or never been preached or heard of there are few churches and few Christians, but that

in midnight assemblies the measures are matured for the overthrow of our most holy faith we do not believe. We believe rather that men's souls are longing to welcome a pure religion to their embrace, and that in the minds of many there is a spirit which "intercedeth for them with inarticulate groans." Much of what is called decided infidelity is only a vacuum which Christianity will fill, a darkness which Christianity will disperse, a seeming deadness of the spirit which Christianity will animate with her newness of life. That there is actual infidelity in the West we do not deny. We complain only of exaggeration. Doubtless, besides the positive unbelief that exists, there is a quite extensive though easily to be explained skepticism; and, doubtless, there is the most urgent call for enlightened defenders of Christianity, who shall change a large portion of the public mind from its state of almost simple suspension between faith and unbelief to the side of truth. There is, doubtless, a crisis calling for the most serious effort. Thousands of minds may be saved from *swinging over* into the destruction of infidelity. But are there not many, in the very midst of Christian institutions, where souls have been heathenized from their very birth, who are infidels for very nearly the same reason that holds in the case just presented, because Christianity has never been applied to their minds? If there are such, and we cannot doubt it, we must treat them with a thoughtful reference to their condition. We shall no sooner convert them to Christianity by denouncing their infidelity than we should the inhabitants of Tartary. We must begin in the spirit of kindness, and with gentle yet powerful means excite the spiritual nature to a just action, and guide it in the right path with as much care as we should use towards the intellectual nature. The physician of this perishing frame must couch the bodily eye by the wisest rules and in the most cautious manner; it is only when we come to operate on the eye of the mind that we may be rude and careless and inconsiderate.

But, as we have already said, infidelity sometimes consists in a spiritual nature perverted and depraved. The infidel has sometimes made himself an infidel in the most fearful violation of his conscience and the law of God. If Christianity has been justly and luminously set forth to his intellect and moral sense, so that its nature is understood and the duty of welcoming it to his bosom is felt, and is then rejected by his affections and his will, if this rejection is persevered in and confirmed, if by his own voluntary purpose he at first darkens and at length destroys the conviction which the

providence of God and the preaching of the word had fixed in his breast, and extinguishes that sense of duty which the reflection of this belief to his heart had caused to shine there, — when all this is included in the definition of unbelief, what can be a more deadly crime! Here we find, and abundantly, all the essentials of guilt. We find a thoroughly and perseveringly dishonest will, a strong and mastering purpose against right, a determination, at all events and in spite of all beings, even the Greatest, to hold out against goodness and truth. We doubt not there are some cases in which this description is more or less realized, and wherever it is realized *infidelity* is *irreligion*. It consists in a bad heart and a bad life.

That such infidelity as this prevails in modern society to some considerable extent we fear, principally from two circumstances, among others of less importance. First, from an unusual intimacy presented in these days between infidelity and vice. The most hopeful comparison of former times with the present must, we think, convince us of this. But we wish not to dwell upon the fact. The other circumstance is the coïncidence, the almost identity, of infidelity and atheism. We must confess that in almost every infidel publication with which we have met, the veil that covers the denial of God's existence is exceedingly thin. And what is the belief of any infidels who may not deny the existence of God? How does the idea they have of God compare with that of the Christian? Is the God of an immortal being the same with the God of a mortal one? Is the God who is now seen with the eye of faith, and will hereafter be seen face to face, the same with the God whose character may be anything, whose purposes are entirely unknown, and who exists to his creatures no longer after those creatures moulder in the dust? What avails an acknowledgment of God's existence, if his existence has no concern with ours? Why should we raise our thoughts and feelings to the Spirit that inhabits eternity and presides over immensity, if that Spirit heeds not and helps not the communion we desire? If we do not admit that God *exists to us*, it is little better, as to practical religious effect, than if we deny that he exists at all.

Thorough, atheism in most cases, can be the result of nothing but a voluntary struggling against nature. Belief in God's existence is not so much a belief received by the Christian into his mind as violently shaken by the infidel from his. Disbelief requires more of positive effort than belief. We are believers in the very constitution of our souls. The voice of conscience is

the voice of God. The image of the Creator shines within us and it shines all around us. We doubt whether, even with dishonest effort, intellectual atheism can frequently exist. When it does exist it must have almost always had its first source in perverted motives and desires. Yet the ultimate effect is not brought about without an intellectual process. Let us, for a moment, examine that process. The heart has been pained and tortured by the distinct reproof of conscience against sin, and has moved to and fro in restless uneasiness under that burning eye that never slumbers. But it has seen that, for the accomplishment of its desire to be freed from all regard to God's laws by having the evidences of God's existence refuted to itself, recourse must be had to the intellect. The heart, in its better feelings, in its high aspirations, in that dissatisfaction of desires and hopes within it which still exists after the world has poured out all its enjoyments into their unfathomable capacities, in its persuasion or rather in the persuasion of these very desires and hopes that their own existence must be prolonged to the full attainment of those most clear and determinate objects for which they were made, and which it were mockery to tell them are yet answered, — yes, the heart, having such a constitution as it has, will not fulfil that desire of atheism which the anguish of its own unworthiness creates. Elsewhere it dismisses that desire for its answer. It will not suffer its own thorough perversion. It will never crucify its better self to its baser and corrupted nature. Its purer principles will never utterly give over their rights, will never submit entirely to perish. Wounded and tortured though they may be, they "cannot, but by annihilating, die." The depraved purpose must then seek other means of effecting its object. It must continue to strengthen itself till it can grow into fixed resolution, till it can gain over the will, with all its awful power for good or evil, for the exaltation or ruin of the soul. Banded together with the will, so that the desire, which before, though strong, was an uncertain and fluctuating thing, is enabled to move with a steady aim, it next makes its assault upon the intellect, and calls upon it with all power and from all its resources to confirm the horrible renunciation made of the great Creator. It is required to expend all its acuteness and power, all its knowledge and philosophy, in this work. It is made to rouse all its energies, to send forth its faculties into the worlds of matter and of mind, and collect every lurking possibility of the non-existence of Jehovah which may inhabit any nook or corner in either of these worlds. It is reminded

that the field over which it is to extend its search is so boundless that many of these possibilities may be found; and when they are all brought together and contemplated in one mass, — when they are viewed in the light of calm reason by themselves, — when every other object in the wide creation is excluded from view, not only those more important and irresistible testimonies which demonstrate an "eternal Power and Godhead," but also those millions of side-lights which glance in numberless confusion from every part of the immense structure of the universe, — when these also are shut out, lest they should trouble the eye that would gaze intently on a particular object, — when all this is done, the soul may be forced into the conclusion that there is no God. The intellect receives its errand. The strong desire outrunning from the mind marks the line of its investigation before it. Its faculties consider all things with reference to a single purpose; and thus narrowed down, so far as the *purpose* of their exercise is concerned, to a mere needle-point of action, pursue the course and effect the object of the desire. The result of the investigation is sometimes, we fear, the denial, with a bold face and a hardened heart, of His existence without whose existence no investigation of the forms of existence could be made, as indeed there would be none to investigate.

Such may have been the process, which perhaps we have described too minutely, in the minds of many of those who lead on the ranks of infidelity. Armed with the belief thus attained, they proceed to destroy the confidence of other men in their own spiritual natures, and to conduct them through the same dreadful course which they have pursued. How, then, are we to treat those whom we find in this condition?

1. We must restore to them that confidence in their own souls of which, whether willingly or unwillingly, they have been despoiled. The same caution we have already mentioned must be observed here. We are not to propose disputations on dogmatical tenets, or even arguments on general religious theses. We are not to strike violently upon the intellectual principles which the infidel maintains as correct. Least of all are we to exclaim against his inconsistency and blindness and sin, inconsistent and blind and sinful though he may be. It is not the violent passions of his mind which we wish to excite, but his moral nature; and *means* must be adapted to *ends*. We must awaken his good affections and hold out before them their noblest objects, we must call out

the principle of faith and give it its highest exercise. And, in doing this, we must use that wise variety of subordinate influences, and that self-adaptation to the changing circumstances of each different case, which a sound discretion will advise. Having thus commenced, we may proceed, with more particular purpose, to produce strong convictions and feelings in regard to great and fundamental truths which have a special connexion with the spiritual nature.

The class of persons of which we now speak are atheists. How shall we impress them with a strong faith in the existence of God? We shall make a few remarks on this point, as we are apprehensive there may be in regard to it some errors of practice. The existence of God is not only to be proved to the intellect, but to be perceived and felt by the spiritual nature. And if the *soul* can be prepared to welcome this truth, there will be no difficulty as to its intellectual belief. Let us, then, not present it as an abstract proposition external to themselves, and to be established by external arguments, but as a truth which has it foundation in their own spirits. Let us begin with their own convictions, let us fall into company with their own minds, and we may at length conduct them to a belief in God which shall be a faith both of the intellect and the heart. In calling the attention of the unbeliever to the debate of intellectual propositions, we draw him from that interior self-consciousness and self-conviction which are especially required. We take him *from* God while endeavouring to bring him *to* God. Faith in God, — what is it? A conclusion of the understanding? The last of a chain of related ideas? The result of a demonstration? We know it is something more. And how are we to prove the existence of God to a man who will not *see* him in the forms of beauty and grandeur by which he is surrounded, and in the shining frame of an immortal soul within him? *Prove* God's existence to the unbeliever! *Prove* that space is around him, the earth beneath him, and the heavens above him! *Prove* that in Him he lives and moves and has his being! Prove that he *has* life and motion and being! In respect to this eternal truth we are rather to direct the *attention* of the unbeliever, to direct the *gaze* of his mind, *affections* as well as intellect, to what he must *see*, than to show him something which has never yet been unveiled to his eye. The proposition that God exists stands above those that are to be reasoned upon and logically proved.

These remarks touch the general propriety of the case. We

do not deny that the course here opposed may in some cases be partially adopted with advantage. But we shall never be able, in giving formal demonstrations of God's existence, like demonstrations of mathematical problems, fully to convey the idea we wish to communicate. It is so all-glorious and lofty that it cannot be so expressed. Its right understanding requires the conceptions of the whole soul, — conceptions in forming which every faculty of the soul has rendered its aid.

But we can dwell no longer on this part of the subject.

C. A. Bartol.

Men Accountable for their Faith.

Among the various inquiries to which the infidelity of the times has given rise there is no one more interesting than the question, how far men are accountable for their belief or unbelief; in other words, whether faith is a proper subject of legislation. Recent occurrences have brought this question, as it respects human tribunals, before the public mind, and furnished opportunities for a full and free discussion of it. The result seems to be, that, though civil governments have a right to legislate on this subject, it is seldom expedient to exercise that right; that, on the contrary, it is better to let opinions have their free course, and trust to the good sense of the community to correct whatever is false or injurious. With regard to Divine legislation the Scriptures appear to have decided this question in the affirmative. If we may trust the natural interpretation of certain texts, or indeed the whole tenor of the New Testament, mankind are considered accountable for their belief. The justice of the law by which we are made thus accountable is not generally understood. We are so accustomed to think and speak of our religious faith as something independent of our own wills, as regulated by circumstances over which we have no control, such as the natural constitution of our minds, the force of the evidence presented to us, &c., that we do not readily understand how we can be held responsible for our belief or disbelief in any doctrine. But is this idea of faith altogether correct?

From what we know of the Deity, from the character of the religion he has given us, it certainly is not supposable that he would require of us anything inconsistent with the nature and capacities we have received from him, or that he would call us to account for that which he has not placed within our control. If, therefore, as we have supposed, the Scriptures declare us to be accountable for our faith, the fact affords a strong presumption that faith is not so wholly independent of our wills as we are apt to imagine, but, on the contrary, is a thing very much within our control. And this presumption is abundantly confirmed by a careful and candid examination of our condition in relation to the truths of religion. In the following remarks we shall enter very briefly into this examination, and endeavour to show, as concisely as possible, the justice of the law which calls us to account for our religious opinions.

It cannot be denied, in the first place, that we are possessed of faculties which fit us for the investigation of truth, that we are abundantly furnished with outward aids to inquiry, means of information, and sources of evidence. If we have these materials, we have the means of forming a correct faith. These means cannot be considered in any other light than as a part of our moral furniture, as among the appointed instruments of our moral discipline. Therefore, if we are moral beings at all, if we are justly accountable for anything, we are justly accountable for the use we make of these means, and, consequently, for the faith we form by them, or for the want of faith which may arise from the neglect of them. But moral responsibility necessarily implies a control of the will over that for which we are to answer; and this condition, it is maintained by some, is not applicable to matters of opinion. They refer us to the diversities of faith which exist among men equally zealous for the truth and equally conscientious in their pursuit of it. So great a discrepancy in the results of human investigation, it is urged, is inconsistent with the doctrine that men are responsible for their faith, for it brings us to this dilemma: either we must maintain that all who dissent from the true creed, whatever that creed may be, are morally culpable, or else we must allow that moral integrity is perfectly compatible with errors in faith. In the former case, how are we to explain the fact that men of equal excellence hold very opposite opinions? and in the latter case, what becomes of our responsibility?

It will not be difficult to reconcile this objection with our doc-

trine. A more accurate investigation will convince us that the fact on which the objection rests has been greatly overstated. It is not true that different minds, employing the same means *with equal faithfulness and equal candour*, have come to entirely opposite conclusions. This cannot be. Truth is one, and the faculties by which truth is ascertained are essentially the same — the same in kind, though not in degree — in every mind; consequently, where equal advantages have been enjoyed, and where the inquiry has been equally conscientious, the result must be the same — the same in all essential points. There may be slight differences, the same truth may be stated in diverse ways, there may even be discrepancies in unessential particulars, but there must be, under the circumstances supposed, an agreement in all that is fundamental, there must be a unanimous judgment on all the grand central truths of religion. By the eternal laws of the human mind and by the unchangeable character of God it cannot be otherwise. The truth is, differences of opinion among good and thinking men are rather nominal than real. Such men differ in form and word rather than in substance. However different the language they employ in their respective confessions of faith, a minute comparison of their real opinions as to particular points in those confessions will show, in most cases, that, while their nominal creeds disagree, their inward convictions coïncide. Thus, for example, the doctrine of original sin, as it is professed by one party, sounds absurd and shocking in the ears of the opposite party. But let two honest and intelligent inquirers from these two parties meet together and question each other on this subject, and it will be found that they do not differ essentially, it will be found that what is termed total depravity, entire alienation from God, utter corruption of the heart, signifies, in the mind of him who subscribes to such language, nothing more than indifference to religion, or a strong tendency to practices at variance with the law of God; and the existence of these evils, so strongly expressed by one party, is not denied by the other. As it is with this so it is with other disputed doctrines; though expressed in different language, they amount, in the minds of good and thinking men, to nearly if not exactly the same thing. It is a fact of frequent occurrence and well-known to everyone that individuals of different sects, who had long been accustomed to regard each other as holding the most opposite views, when an opportunity has occurred of comparing their opinions, have found to their astonishment

that there existed a very close agreement between them. So inadequate is the language of creeds to express the various shades of human opinion, so intimate is the connexion between equality of moral worth and unanimity of faith. The light of truth, like that of the sun, is one and unchangeable, it suffers no alteration or diminution from the various causes which affect our vision. But, as human observers, stationed at different points of the earth's surface and looking through a different medium, are differently affected by the same luminary, so human minds, differently educated, trained, and disciplined, have different views of the same truth. Nevertheless, in the former case it is the sun, and not a deceptive meteor, that gives its light; and even so, where the heart is pure, it is truth, and not error, that furnishes the substance of faith. Thus the objection drawn from differences of opinion is in part answered by showing that such differences, in all cases where a conscientious love of truth has accompanied the use of proper means in the investigation of truth, are nominal and not real.

But are there no real differences of opinion? Are not essentially opposite views sometimes entertained by different minds? Undoubtedly; but not under the circumstances supposed. When differences of opinion do occur where the means of investigation have been the same, they are to be ascribed to different degrees of candour and integrity in the inquirers. The error, on whichever side it lies, must be considered as wilful; the will had some influence, remote or immediate, in producing it. In some cases the influence of the will in this matter is indirect; as where a man, having been brought up with strong prejudices in favour of particular doctrines, comes to the study of religious subjects under the full influence of such prejudices, suffers them to direct his inquiries and to determine the results. Will it be said that that man is not responsible for his opinions, that he is not culpable for the errors into which he may fall, because they are the effect of education? To what purpose, then, were we endowed with a capacity for ascertaining the truth, if we are permitted to pervert it or to reject its guidance with impunity? Is not this capacity a talent given us for definite and important purposes? and will God hold him guiltless who neglects to apply it to the purposes for which it was given? Surely not. We are accountable, then, for those prejudices of which by a proper use of the powers imparted to us we might have divested ourselves. — There are other cases in which the will has a more

direct and immediate agency in determining the false views we adopt. Men are often influenced in their inquiries by motives of vanity, by intellectual ambition, by pride of opinion, or by a fear of the consequences which must follow if certain doctrines be admitted, rather than by a love of the truth. Such inquirers, foreseeing that the results to which a candid investigation would probably lead them are not such as they would wish to adopt and profess, forbear to examine, or, if they have partially examined, forbear to push their inquiries, and compel their minds to adopt other views more consonant with their feelings and with their preconceived notions. We say, compel their minds to adopt these views, that is, they voluntarily accustom themselves to contemplate them as desirable objects of faith, rack their invention for arguments to support them, until, gradually, by a natural and well-known process, they begin to believe in them, and at last are fully established in their convictions. The opinions of such persons must be ascribed to a wilful rejection of the truth. They deserve the name of falsehood rather than of error. — A third case is that in which men never think of inquiring. There are some in every community who care nothing about truth, but follow with blind indifference the guidance of those among whom their lot has been cast. Notwithstanding the pursuit of truth is going on with active zeal around them, notwithstanding the sharp contests of neighbours and fellow-citizens are constantly admonishing them to search and see on which side the truth lies, they suffer themselves to be dragged along by circumstances; and wherever, in the revolution of opinions and the division of parties, they happen to fall, there they remain, in contented ignorance. So far from examining the tenets of the party to which chance has assigned them, they do not even know what those tenets are. In this case, too, as in those above stated, it cannot be denied that the will is at fault. The obligation to inquire into the truths of religion is a solemn and it is a known obligation. No one in this age and country can neglect it through ignorance of duty. They who neglect it do so wilfully, they are culpable for their neglect and responsible for the errors which may arise from it.

These three cases comprise all the differences of opinion, consequently all the aberrations from the truth, which can occur where the requisite means of information and sufficient advantages for inquiry are enjoyed. And as in all these it appears that the aberration is wilful and might be avoided

by a proper use of the means afforded us, the objection against the doctrine of human accountability in matters of faith is fully answered.

It appears, then, that our religious opinions are not so entirely independent of our wills, are not so wholly beyond our control, as we are apt to imagine. That is not the true view of faith which represents it as a necessary result produced by the mechanical operation of certain influences on the mind. Let anyone who has arrived at fixed opinions on religious subjects examine the history of those opinions, and he will find that in the formation of them he was guided and controlled to a very great extent by the action of the will. He will find that where probabilities in favour of particular doctrines were equally balanced, it was the will which determined the preponderance and decided the election. He will find that when new light suddenly dawned upon him, it was the will which determined him to follow its guidance. But if it be true that the will has such an influence in determining our faith, there can be no doubt as to the equity of the law which makes faith an object of legislation, a ground of retribution. Our notions on the subject of faith, it is to be feared, are much too lax and altogether unworthy the age in which we live. What are the current maxims of the day in relation to this subject? "No matter what a man believes, provided he is sincere in his belief." As if it were possible to be sincere in the belief of a doctrine essentially false, at a time when the means of distinguishing falsehood from truth are in everyone's hands. Again: "It matters but little what a man's faith is, provided his actions are right." As if righteousness and truth could be separated, as if it were possible to walk according to the law of God without following the light which God has provided for our direction. It is important that men should know and feel the solemn obligation which rests upon them to think right as well as to act right. The one is as much the end and object of our being as the other. We were created to pursue and enjoy truth; and every error which is received into the mind and allowed to dwell there must have a great and pernicious influence on our destiny. It is of great consequence what we believe, and he who asserts that truth is of no importance except in the sense of sincerity knows not what truth is.

It will be readily understood that these remarks are chiefly applicable to infidels, to those who reject Christianity altogether; and it is when viewed in this bearing that the im-

portance of the subject is most apparent. The danger to be apprehended from the infidelity so prevalent at the present day consists not so much in the temptations which it presents as in the indulgence with which it is received. By what flimsy arguments do we often hear it justified! The infidel is represented as one who by the laws of his mind is compelled to believe as he does, — as one who after a candid and careful examination is forced to reject the gospel. It is difficult to say whether in such representations ignorance of human nature or indifference to truth is most predominant. But it is not difficult to perceive and to show that such representations are very false and very injurious. It is impossible for me to believe in Christianity, and at the same time to believe that anyone of sound mind, with all its evidences before him, can conscientiously reject it. It is said that the lives of these persons are a sufficient warrant for their sincerity, that it is impossible that men who are so correct in their morality should be dishonest in their professions. But is it true that the lives of infidels are generally correct? Far from it. The history of the past and the observation of the present bear witness to the contrary. For one unbeliever whose moral character is unimpeachable you shall find hundreds whose lives are bad, and not only bad but infamous. Besides, if the fact were as it is represented, the argument built upon it would have no weight. May not a man be correct in some things and faulty in others? The speculative philosopher, who spends most of his time in seclusion, has but little temptation to those sins which attract public notice. His transgressions are intellectual. In him *opposition to the truth* is the direction and form assumed by those evil propensities which in another man would have manifested themselves in sensual indulgence or in acts of fraud and violence.

But though the Scripture-doctrine of accountability in matters of faith applies principally to infidels, it applies also, in a greater or less degree, to those errors and false doctrines maintained by professed Christians. Trifling errors, such as consist rather in imperfect views of the truth than in wilful departure from the truth, and do not argue any moral obliquity on the part of those who hold them, may not essentially affect our character or happiness. It is comparatively of little consequence whether I attribute the retribution that awaits the sinner to the wrath of God or to the natural and necessary effects of sin, but it is of great consequence whether I do or do not believe in any retribution. It

is of little consequence whether in thinking of Christ I consider rather his human nature or the divine nature that was manifested in him, but it is of great moment whether I believe the man Jesus to have been identical with or inferior to the only true and living God.

Finally, in this as in all things, our responsibility is exactly proportioned to the advantages we have enjoyed and to the circumstances in which we have been placed. The pagan is not to be condemned for his unbelief in Christianity whose evidences have never been presented to him. The uneducated Christian brought up in all the ignorance of the Romish church is not responsible for the errors which he has inherited from his fathers. We are to be judged according to our means; and where the means are abundant, as they are among us at the present day, the responsibility they impose is great, and the judgment which awaits those who neglect them will be great also. Well, then, does it become us to examine our convictions and to inquire into the groundwork of our faith, that we may know whether we have conscientiously followed the light that was given us. "I believe, Lord help thou mine unbelief," was the cry of one who had caught a glimpse of the truth, and was anxiously struggling to realize its full and perfect illumination. So must we struggle and so must we pray. A distant glimmer of the truth is granted to us all; it is our business to search and study till that faint glimmer expands into a full and consistent faith.

F. H. Hedge.

[We do not remember to have anywhere met with so condensed and at the same time satisfactory a statement of the evidence for the Unitarianism of the Christian church during the first three centuries, as is presented in the essay of which the following article is a part. It was written several years ago by a gentleman of Meadville, Pennsylvania, since more generally known as the founder and principal patron of the Unitarian church in that village, and as the editor of "The Unitarian Essayist." Only a small edition of it was printed, and its circulation was almost entirely confined to the immediate vicinity of Meadville. As but few of our readers have, therefore, probably met with it, we believe we shall need no apology for reprinting it in this journal. — Ed.]

A Letter on the Unitarianism of the First Three Centuries of the Christian Era.

TO THE READER.

The following letter was originally written for "The Craw-

ford Messenger." The length to which it has been extended, and the importance which in my opinion belongs to the subject of inquiry, cause it to be now presented to the public in its present shape. Unitarianism is often represented as a new thing which has sprung up of late, and which, therefore, cannot be true. It was to remove the injurious tendency of this error that the following letter was written. As a literary man I have no pretensions. My only aim has been to state, in a plain, perspicuous manner, the evidence belonging to the subject, so as to enable everyone to judge for himself respecting an important point of ecclesiastical history, and rendered doubly interesting on account of the consequences which result from it. To the labours of Dr. Priestley I have been indebted for the extracts given from the Fathers. I have also availed myself of the historical researches of Mosheim and Gibbon; and my task has in a measure been limited to the collection of the evidence, and to embodying it in a shape which should render it perfectly accessible to all classes of readers.

I have endeavoured to conduct this inquiry with the respect due to the faith held by numbers of my fellow-Christians, but at the same time, too, with that fearless freedom of research which ought to characterize all our inquiries after truth. But we are told that the doctrine of the Trinity is a mystery, that is, something totally incomprehensible, and therefore not the subject of human reason and human inquiry. But by whom are we told this? Not by the Deity, not by Christ, or his apostles, but by men, who, feeling themselves unable to defend a favourite dogma against the objections which reason brings against it, have invented this screen to save it from investigation. And why should we not subject its truth or fallacy to this test? Surely, if there be one thing certain under the sun, it is that the doctrine of the Trinity, whether true or false, *rests entirely on human reasoning*. That this dogma is not explicitly taught in the Scriptures is admitted by all; but we are told that there are certain passages found there from which the perfect equality of the Son and the Holy Spirit with the Father may be *inferred*. The doctrine is, therefore, one of *inference*. To draw inferences is to reason; and thus we see that this dogma, concerning which we are told that we must not reason, is entirely the offspring of human reasoning. But it is evident that by drawing fair inferences from *correct* premises we can never arrive at a proposition which is a mystery, in the popular sense of that term, that is, something

incomprehensible. The result of human reasoning must always be something which the human understanding can take in and appreciate. If it be maintained that there are passages in Scripture which teach that the Son and the Holy Spirit are each of them God, equally with the Father (a thing which I totally deny), the result is not a mystery, but a very plain dogma, teaching that there are three Gods. If it be said that other passages in Scripture teach the Divine Unity, and that this constitutes the mystery, I admit the fact, but deny the inference. We have then not a mystery, but a plain, palpable contradiction, which would shake the very foundation of revelation. And such, too, has been but too often the effect of this dogma. I have met with several men in life, who, though educated as Christians, had ceased to believe in revealed religion, and everyone of these had been driven into infidelity by the impossibility of believing the doctrine of the Trinity and the dark dogmas of Calvinism. I am the friend of Christianity, because I believe it to be the cause of human happiness; and if this letter should save anyone from rejecting Christianity, or should serve to remove even only some one troublesome or perplexing doubt, my labour will not have been fruitless.

Meadville, November 17, 1830.

A writer in "The Crawford Messenger" of the 11th November, under the signature of "A Presbyterian," has deemed proper to make the assertion that the Christian church, during the first three centuries, was Trinitarian. Of this I shall certainly not complain. Perhaps I ought to thank him for furnishing me with the opportunity of entering somewhat more fully than I have formerly done into the inquiry as to the opinions held on this subject during the first three centuries, as that is a subject well deserving of a careful examination. I could have wished that this investigation had devolved on some one more capable of doing justice to it than I am, or that, when it fell to my share, I might have had more leisure to bestow on it than my avocations will allow of; but I flatter myself, that, with the proofs which I can at any moment command, I shall be able to satisfy the reader that "A Presbyterian" is mistaken in every one of the positions he has taken. The only thing in that gentleman's essay which I have seen with regret is the strong personal feeling which

pervades every part of it. Surely, men such as "A Presbyterian" and myself ought to be able to discuss a historical fact, or even a religious opinion, and arrive at different results, without our suffering such difference of sentiments to degenerate into any feeling other than that of personal friendship and good will.

Before I enter into the main subject of our inquiry, I wish to make a few prefatory remarks which have a strong bearing on it, and which I request the reader to keep constantly in mind in the perusal of the following letter.

1. By the term *God*, we, in this age and in this country, constantly understand the Supreme Being. But during the first three centuries, in heathen countries, where gods were numerous, and where almost every emperor on his death became a god, the term *God* must have had a much more loose and indefinite meaning; and hence, when we find the title *God* very freely applied to Christ by the Christian writers of that era, it does not follow that they believed him to be the Supreme God. This use of the term *God* in a qualified or subordinate acceptation prevailed also among the Jews, in proof of which I beg leave to refer the reader to Exod. xxii. 28, where we read, "Thou shalt not revile the gods (meaning the judges) nor curse the ruler of thy people"; also to Exod. vii. 1; Ps. xlv. 6, 7; Ps. lxxxii. 1; John x. 35.

2. The same remark applies to the term *worshipping*. That term among us Protestants is almost exclusively used to designate that religious homage and adoration which man pays to his Maker; but the word in the original Greek, which has been thus translated, has a much less definite meaning; it generally expresses the reverence or salutation paid by any inferior to a superior, leaving the degree of the homage in each case to be determined by the known relation between the parties; and if our translators, in all cases where Christ is concerned, have deemed it proper to render the original Greek by the term *worshipping*, that only proves the bias on the minds of the translators, and nothing further. On this subject I beg leave to refer the reader to 1 Chron. xxix. 20, where it is said, "And all the congregation . . . *worshipped* the LORD, and the king; and to Matt. xviii. 26, where the servant is said to have *worshipped* the king.

3. We must not consider any proof which we may find of the preëxistence of Christ evidence of his proper Deity. A large portion of the Unitarians believe in the preëxistence,

as firmly as the Trinitarians do; but surely, to have existed before the creation of the material universe, and to be the self-existent Jehovah, are different things. Most, if not all, of the Fathers, after Justin Martyr, believed that God, previously to the creation of this world, created an intelligent, super-angelic being, called the Logos (Word), Son, or Christ, *by whose instrumentality* he afterwards created the world, and who, at a subsequent period, became the medium of God's intercourse with man during the Old Testament dispensation.

4. When in the writings of the third century we meet with the term *Trinity*, as we occasionally do, we must not give to that term the meaning which it now has. The *Trinity* of that age was composed of the Supreme God, and of two other beings *perfectly distinct from and subordinate to him*, called the Son and the Holy Spirit, who acted as ministers of the Supreme God. For proof of this I beg leave to refer the reader to Jortin's *Remarks on Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. II. pp. 253 – 255.*

With these obvious and necessary remarks, the propriety of which will become more apparent hereafter, I pass to the consideration of the points made by "A Presbyterian."

The first point made by "A Presbyterian" is, that "The early Fathers are direct in their testimony that the divinity of Christ and the Holy Trinity was their own faith, and that no writer of those centuries, prior to the council of Nice, intimates that such was not the faith of the church." Such is the *assertion*, now let us see the *fact*.

In the first century we find the apostle Peter, in his discourse to the Jews recorded Acts ii. 22 – 24, telling them, "Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, *a man* approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs *which God did by him* in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know, him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain, *whom God hath raised up;*" and, verses 32, 33, he adds, "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses; therefore, being *by the*

* The passage in Jortin to which reference is here made we presume to be the following: Speaking of the religious sentiments of Manichæus, who lived in the third century, Jortin remarks, "He held a Trinity, and the consubstantiality of the Persons, but he thought them as really distinct as three men. We must not hence charge him with Tritheism, unless we would involve in the same charge *many of the most illustrious Fathers*, who were *in the same sentiment*." — Ed.

right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear;" and, verse 36, we read, "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath *made* that same Jesus whom ye have crucified both Lord and Christ." St. Paul writes, 1 Cor. viii. 6, "But to us there is but *one* God, *the Father*, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him." 1 Tim. ii. 5, he says, "For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." And, Eph. iv. 5, 6, we read, "One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, *who is above all*, and through all, and in you all." Surely, the men who speak and write thus must be Unitarians. No Trinitarian would have expressed himself in this manner.

The *genuine* works of those called Apostolical Fathers belonging to the first century I believe to be in perfect unison with this. In them the term *God* is never applied to Christ, that I know of. If it is, I will thank my antagonist to point out the place.

In the second century we have, first, Justin Martyr, A. D. 140, who says, speaking of Christ, "Than whom we know no prince more kingly and more righteous, after the God who generated him;" * and again, speaking of the God in heaven, and the God upon earth (Christ) who conversed with Abraham, he says, "The former is the Lord of that Lord who was upon earth, as *his* Father and *God, the cause of his existence, and of his being powerful and Lord and God.*" †

We next have Athenagoras, A. D. 178, who does not consider Christ as *the one God*, but as one employed by the one God. He says, "Our doctrine teaches us that there is one God, the Maker of all things, who made all things by his own Logos." ‡

Clemens Alexandrinus, who lived A. D. 194, says, "The Mediator performs the will of the Father. The Logos is the Mediator, being common to both, the Seal of God, and the Saviour of men. Of the one he is the *servant*, but our instructer." § And again, "There is one unbegotten, almighty Father; and one first-begotten, by whom all things were, and without whom nothing was made. For one is truly God, who made the Origin of all things, meaning his first-begotten Son." ‖

* Apol. I. p. 17. † Dial. p. 413. ‡ Apol. p. 40.
§ Pædag. Lib. III. Cap. I. p. 215. ‖ Strom. Lib. VI. p. 644.

In the third century we meet with Origen, perhaps the most learned of all the Fathers, who flourished about the year 225. He says, "The Father only is the Good; and the Saviour, as he is the image of the invisible God, so he is the image of his goodness." * "The Logos did whatever the Father ordered." † Again he says, "The Saviour and the Holy Spirit *are more excelled by the Father* than he and the Holy Spirit excel other things, &c.; and he (the Saviour), though excelling such and such great things (namely, thrones, principalities, and powers) in essence and office and power and Godhead, *is by no means to be compared with the Father.*" ‡ Speaking of the difference between the Greek prepositions διὰ and ὑπό [*dia* and *hupo*], the former denoting *instrumentality*, and the latter proper *causality*, he says, "If all things were made (διὰ) [*dia*] by the Logos (that is, as the Instrument), they were not made (ὑπό) [hupo] by the Logos (that is, as the cause), but by one *who is better and greater than the Logos;* and who can that be but the Father?" §

The next Father I shall produce is Novatian, who flourished about the year 240. He says, "The Father only is the only good God." ‖ "The rule of truth teaches us to believe, after the Father, in the Son of God, Christ Jesus, our Lord God, but the Son of God, of that God who is one, and alone the Maker of all things." ¶ "Though he was in the form of God, *he did not attempt the robbery of being equal with God.* For though he knew that he was God, of God the Father, *he never compared himself with God the Father;* remembering that he was of the Father, and that he had what the Father gave him." ** "The Son is less than the Father, because he is sanctified by him." †† "God the Father is the Maker and Creator of all, who alone has no origin, invisible, immense, immortal, eternal, the one God, to whose greatness, majesty, and power nothing can be preferred or compared." ‡‡ "If Christ had been uncreated, and likewise unbegotten, there would have been two unbegotten, and therefore two Gods." §§ "The Son does nothing of his own pleasure, nor does he come of himself; but in all things obeys his Father's commands." ‖‖

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* Com. Vol. I. p. 377.
‡ Com. Vol. II. p. 218.
‖ Ch. IV. p. 11.
** Ch. XXII. p. 84.
‡‡ Ch. XXXI. p. 119.
§§ Ch. XXXI. p. 122.
† Ad. Celsum, Lib. II. p. 63.
§ Com. Vol. II. p. 56.
¶ Ch. IX. p. 26.
†† Ch. XXVII. p. 102.
‖‖ Ch. XXXI. p. 123.

The last of the writers of the third century whom I shall cite is Arnobius, who flourished about the year 290. He says, "The omnipotent and *only* God sent Christ";* and again, "Christ, a God, spake by the order of the principal God."†

In the beginning of the fourth century we meet with Lactantius and Eusebius, who flourished, the first about the year 310, and the latter about the year 320. Lactantius says, "The Son patiently obeys the will of the Father, and does nothing but what the Father wills or orders."‡ "He approved his fidelity to God; for he taught that there is one God, and that *he only* ought to be worshipped; *nor did he ever say that he was God.* For he would not have preserved his allegiance, if, being sent to take away a multiplicity of Gods and to preach *one God*, he had brought in another, besides that one. This would not have been to be the herald of one God, or of him who sent him, but have been doing his own business, and separating himself from him whom he came to honour. Wherefore, because he was so faithful, because he assumed nothing to himself, that he might fulfil the commands of him who sent him, he received the dignity of perpetual Priest, the honour of supreme King, the power of a Judge, and the title of God."§ Eusebius says, "There is one God, and the only-begotten comes out of him."‖ "Christ *being neither the Supreme God, nor an angel, is of a middle nature between them*; and being neither the Supreme God, nor a man, but the Mediator, is in the middle between them, the only-begotten Son of God."¶

I have thus carried the examination from the first days of Christianity down to the Council of Nice, in the year 325. The witnesses I have produced are not obscure heretics, but men of high standing in the church, and emphatically denominated its *Fathers*, many of them the very men cited by my antagonist. And now it appears to me that, if human language has any meaning, I have shown that none of these men were Trinitarians according to the present meaning of that term, but that they all believed our Saviour to be a Being *perfectly distinct from and subordinate to the Father*, which is exactly the faith held by Unitarians. What establishes this fact still further is, that in the next age, when the church really became

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* Lib. II. p. 57.
† Lib. II. p. 50.
‡ Lib. IV. Sect. 29, p. 447.
§ Lib. IV. Sect. 14, p. 395.
‖ De Laudibus Const. p. 752.
¶ Contra Marcellum, Lib. I. p. 8.

Trinitarian, we meet no more with language such as that which I have quoted; a sure sign that a change of sentiments took place about this time.

The second *assertion* of "A Presbyterian" is, that all who, during the first three centuries, denied the Divinity of Jesus Christ and of the Holy Ghost were constantly considered heretics, and as such expelled from the church. Now this assertion is, if possible, still more unlucky than the first. In addition to the mass of evidence already produced, I shall give only that of Mosheim, a Trinitarian, and the best of our ecclesiastical historians. Speaking of the famous Arian controversy, he says (*Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. I. p. 411), "Soon after its commencement, even in the year 317, a new contention arose in *Egypt*, upon a subject of much higher importance, and with consequences of a yet more pernicious nature. The subject of this fatal controversy, which kindled such deplorable division throughout the Christian world, was the doctrine of *three Persons in the Godhead;* a doctrine which in the three preceding centuries had happily escaped the vain curiosity of human researches, and been left undefined and undetermined by any particular set of ideas. The church, indeed, had frequently decided against the Sabellians and others, that there was a real difference between the *Father* and the *Son*, and that the *Holy Ghost* was distinct from them both, or, as we commonly speak, that three distinct Persons exist in the Deity; but the mutual relation of these Persons to each other, and the nature of that distinction that subsists between them, are matters that hitherto were neither disputed nor explained, and with respect to which the church had, consequently, observed a profound silence. Nothing was dictated to the faith of Christians in this matter; nor were there any modes of expression prescribed as requisite to be used in speaking of this mystery. Hence it happened that the Christian doctors entertained different sentiments upon this subject without giving the least offence, and discoursed variously concerning the distinctions between *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost;* each one following his respective opinion with the utmost liberty." Mosheim also tells us, Vol. I. p. 213, that the Nazarenes were Unitarians, and that they were never reckoned among the heretics by the early Christians. He says that Epiphanius, a writer of the fourth century, is the first who places them among the heretics. On these admissions of Mosheim I would remark, that they are

utterly irreconcilable with the Trinitarianism of the first three centuries. That while all believed Christ to be a subordinate being, all should live in harmony, though some believed somewhat differently as to the mode of his existence from what others did, — this is perfectly natural, and what we see in our own days; but that some should have deemed him to be the Supreme, Self-existing Jehovah, the true object of religious worship, and that others should have believed him to be a subordinate, dependent being, and yet that this difference of sentiment should never have produced dispute or gainsaying between the parties, this is utterly impossible. The history of our own time shows that it is so.

The third and fourth points made by "A Presbyterian" assert that Christ was, during the first ages, the object of prayer among Christians. On this head, in addition to what Lactantius says on this subject, as already noted, I wish to produce Origen, who says, "If we know what prayer is, we must not pray to any created being, not to Christ himself, but only to God, the Father of all, to whom our Saviour himself prayed."* "We are not to pray to a brother, who has the same common Father with ourselves; Jesus himself saying that we must pray to the Father through him. In this we are all agreed, and are not divided about the method of prayer; but should we not be divided, if some prayed to the Father, and some to the Son?"† And Eusebius says, "Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, and the first-born of every creature, teaches us to call his Father *the only true God*, and commands us *to worship him only*." ‡

I flatter myself I have now proved that "A Presbyterian" was totally in error in the first four points made by him. Before I have done, I hope also to establish that he has equally mistaken the decrees of the Council of Nice. But it is time that I should pass to a higher species of evidence to establish the Unitarianism of the first three centuries.

[The remainder in the next Number.]

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* De Oratione, p. 48.
† De Orat. p. 51.
‡ Præpar. Lib. VII. Cap. 15, p. 327.

Malcolm and Witchcraft.

In Malcolm's "Dictionary of the Bible", under the article *Witch*, there is the following sentence:—"That such persons," that is, witches, "have been found among men is abundantly plain from Scripture"; and in proof of this assertion he points to several passages, which it is the object of this article to notice. We did not suppose, however, that any person of any literary eminence would, at the present day, defend the doctrine of witchcraft, though the expression occurs several times in the common version of the Bible. A witch, in the common acceptation of the term, we suppose to mean one who has connexion with some evil, invisible power. This superstition was popular at the time our present version of the Bible was made; it is not, therefore, surprising that phraseology favouring this notion should have been used by the translators, in rendering certain words rather of a vague meaning, especially when it is borne in mind that king James, their patron, was a firm believer in the doctrine of witchcraft. It has been a great misfortune both to religion and humanity, that this word ever found a place in our English Bible. As it is stated in Exodus, chap. xxii. 18, according to the common version, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live," ignorant and bigoted men have claimed a warrant to execute capital punishment on those who were deemed guilty of this supposed crime; and the result has been that many innocent persons both in this country and Europe have lost their lives. But we venture to affirm that there is no passage in the Bible that can be said to give the least support to this superstitious notion.

The Greek version of the Old Testament, which was made by learned Jews about 200 years before the Christian era, and which was used by Christ and the apostles, as their quotations from it evidently show, may be considered a valuable commentary on those ancient Scriptures, and enable us to arrive at the correct meaning of those passages in which the words *Witch* and *Witchcraft* are found. The word translated *Witch* is in Greek * a medical term, from which our English word, *Pharmacy*, is derived. It literally means *A mixer of drugs*. Hence this term is applied to that class of impostors called necromancers, sorcerers, and jugglers, who practised in-

* Φαρμακὸς.

cantations by the use of drugs and other deceptive arts, to impose on the credulous multitude. Thus the passage in Exodus already noticed means nothing more than this: "Thou shalt not protect sorcerers." This word occurs again in Deuteronomy, xviii. 10, in connexion with another, which is usually translated "having a familiar spirit", but which in the Greek means one that has the wonderful faculty of speaking from the chest, literally, *A belly-speaker*, or, in the language of the present day, *A ventriloquist*. Such was the woman of Endor whom Saul consulted. She is said to have had a familiar spirit, which led the translators to pronounce her a witch, as appears from the caption of the chapter. Hence we hear so much of the witch of Endor. The passage noticed in Deuteronomy is in the Greek version as follows: "Let there not be found among you anyone .... who practiseth divinations, or consulteth omens or augury, or maketh use of drugs to practise incantation, or a belly-speaker, or an astrologer, or a necromancer; for everyone who practiseth such things is an abomination to the Lord thy God." This we believe to be the true meaning of the passage, and it will be readily perceived how little support it gives to the doctrine of witchcraft.

The word *Witchcraft* occurs several times, and in Galatians v. 20, it is reckoned among "the works of the flesh." The word* rendered *Witchcraft* is a derivative from the one which is in the English version rendered *Witch*, and means the art of practising incantations, or sleight of hand, an art which the Jews were taught to regard as odious and immoral; hence the Jewish lawgiver and succeeding prophets spoke against those who practised it with unmeasured severity. It was an art derived from the heathen, which was another circumstance why the Jews were to regard it with so great aversion. There is no evidence that those who were instructed in this art were supernaturally gifted, or that they knew or practised anything which is any-wise akin to what in later times has been ignorantly and superstitiously called *Witchcraft*.

P. Smith, Jr.

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* Φαρμακία.

NOTICES OF BOOKS.

The Holy Land and Its Inhabitants. By S. G. Bulfinch. Cambridge. James Munroe & Co. 24mo. pp. 298.

We have long felt the want of a little work, like this, containing a condensed account of the Holy Land and its inhabitants, adapted to popular use. In order to understand the Scriptures it is necessary to have a general acquaintance, at least, with the character and condition, with the manners, customs, and opinions, with the domestic, political, and religious institutions of the people among whom the events recorded took place. But, independently of this consideration, we all feel a peculiar interest in everything that relates to a land and a nation in which our Saviour began and fulfilled his great mission, and to which our religious associations are so strongly bound.

"The traveller," says Mr. Bulfinch, "may pause and meditate on the plains of Greece, and feel that her departed wise and great have left a portion of their spirit in the air they once breathed, the footsteps of their power on the soil they once trod; but is there not a holier feeling, the consciousness of a loftier presence, to the pilgrim standing on the hill of Zion, within the scenes of David's power? What classic recollections can equal those which to the Christian render Palestine another home, and Jerusalem a city of the soul? In those streets his Saviour taught; among the olives on that hill he withdrew to meditate with his disciples; in yonder village he wept over his buried friend, then spoke the word of power, and the grave gave up its dead; in that garden he poured forth the prayer of agony; on that hill he died. Let the Christian often wander through scenes like these, that his interest in the word of God, his knowledge, his piety may be increased." — p. 2, 3.

The object of Mr. Bulfinch's work is to present a condensed account of the history, the laws, the religious rites, and domestic customs of the Jews. The first chapter contains a description of the geography, climate, scenery, &c. of the Holy Land. In the six following chapters we have a judicious abridgement of the history of the Jewish people, from the call of Abraham to the present time. The five following chapters are occupied with an account of the religious institutions, festivals, and ceremonies of the Jews; of their civil and judicial polity; of war, commerce, agriculture, and the arts and sciences among them; and, finally, of their domestic customs and usages.

The whole book is calculated to be very useful to the young student of the Scriptures, as well as to the Sunday teacher, and all who are interested in obtaining and diffusing a correct knowledge of Jewish history and antiquities. The larger works of Jahn, Calmet, and others are not accessible to the greater portion of the religious community, and are not adapted to general use. We are greatly indebted to Mr. Bulfinch for bringing the information which they contain into a briefer and more attractive form in the volume we are noticing.

We observe a few typographical errors; but, in general, the work is well executed, in the style of the two preceding volumes of the Sunday Library for Young Persons, edited by Rev. H. Ware, Jr.

W. N.

Views of Christian Truth, Piety, and Morality. Selected from the Writings of Dr. Priestley. With an Introductory Notice of his Life and Character. By Henry Ware, Jr. Cambridge. James Munroe & Co. 1834. 12mo. pp. 287.

Many flippant writers of ephemeral discourses and essays have denounced Priestley as a profane critic in theology and a shallow philosopher. Some have even had the rashness to class him, with respect to religion, among infidels. Admitting that he spread himself over too wide a surface of physical and intellectual science, and even of theological inquiry, to be always exact and thorough; yet, upon the various subjects which he handled, it would be difficult, if possible, to single out an individual, in modern times, who has given such an impetus to important philosophical discussions, or who has thrown out so many hints which have been taken up and carried forward, and have ended in great results. But our business with him at this time is as a theologian and Christian. And here we think it must be admitted that he was either remarkable for the firmness and constancy of his faith in the divine origin of Christianity, and for his uniform piety and devotion, — or that he was an arrant hypocrite and deceiver. This seems to be the only alternative.

Amidst all the harsh language of his revilers, we do not remember that he has ever been charged with hypocrisy or deception; the charge would be too obviously absurd. But how does it appear that he was remarkable for his faith and piety? We refer to the extracts from his writings, on various occasions, which are collected by Professor Ware; to which, if it were ne-

cessary, might be added similar extracts to a great extent. With such evidence, though we have charity enough to ascribe the asperity with which Priestley's Christian character has been impugned by his enemies to ignorance, yet we have not charity enough to regard their ignorance as wholly excusable. Let them account for his strenuous defence of the divine origin of Christianity, in which he has not been surpassed; for his delight in reading and studying the Scriptures, especially when he "read them with a practical view," of which he speaks most feelingly; for his strict requirements concerning Christian duties, in all the relations of this life, and in the prospect of a future life; for his earnest endeavours to produce reverence for the Lord's day, and for Christian worship and ordinances; for his cheerful and assiduous labours in imparting religious instruction to the young, and in promoting in all persons that elevation of character rising above sin and sensuality and bondage to the world, and fear of reproach, of suffering, and of persecution for conscience's sake, inspired by Christian truth and Christian hopes; in fine, for his habitual devotion, his firm trust in Providence, and consequently heartfelt submission, — his unwavering faith in a future righteous retribution, sustaining him triumphantly through the trials of life. Let all those who profess and call themselves Christians weigh these things, and place in the opposite scale, if they please, his materialism, which appears, in him, never to have stood in the way of the most elevated and spiritual views of Deity, or of thorough faith in a resurrection to a future life, a life of perfect intellectual bliss to the faithful Christian. Let them place in the same scale all his supposed errors concerning the person of the Saviour, the depravity of human nature, the manner in which man's salvation was secured by Jesus Christ, and the whole tissue of metaphysical theology. Of how little importance, after all, do such subtilties and metaphysical niceties appear, compared with those sublime and affecting truths which reach the heart and make the life better, giving us the only true foretaste of heaven!

The closing remarks of Priestley upon "The Duty of Christians respecting the Present Prevalence of Infidelity" show how a righteous man should feel when assaulted either by narrow Christians or by open infidels.

"Let the rational Christian, who justly disclaims such doctrines as those of original sin, arbitrary predestination, the Trinity, and vicarious satisfaction, as the grossest corruptions of his religion, and the principal cause of its present rejection (and which, on this account, his regard for Christianity requires that he should take every opportunity of exposing), be equally prepared to meet the too vehement zeal of the defenders of these doctrines (who are at present the great majority of the nominally Christian world), persons who will not scruple to treat him as a deist or atheist, and also the hatred of the real deists and

atheists of the age. For if he be zealous and active in promoting what he deems to be pure Christianity, their sentiments concerning him will not deserve a softer name. However, the malignity of both are alike insignificant, considering the great object we have in view; and they are infinitely overbalanced by the solid satisfaction which arises from the cordial esteem of a small number of judicious Christian friends, who will approve of our conduct, and join us in it; to say nothing of the exquisite delight which arises from the consciousness of a steady and undaunted pursuit of what is true and right, the hope we entertain of the approbation of our Maker, and the glorious reward of immortality." — pp. 146, 147.

Professor Ware's selections from the religious and moral writings of Priestley appear to us well fitted to fulfil the double purpose he had in view, namely, "to instruct and animate religious readers, and do something [everything necessary] towards vindicating the character of an injured man." They furnish all the testimony requisite for this purpose from the mouth of the author. The "Memoir of Dr. Priestley" (prefixed to the Selections), which, we think, is very judiciously composed, contains all the additional evidence needed to insure the high respect of all candid men for the subject of it, no less as a Christian than a very estimable man and distinguished philosopher.

S. W.

Illustrations of the Divine Government. By T. Southwood Smith, M. D. Second American from the Fourth London Edition. Boston. B. B. Mussey. 12mo. pp. 288. 1834.

We are glad to see a second American edition of this work, in so elegant a form. Whatever may be thought of the opinions on those great and difficult subjects, — the purposes of the Divine government, the origin and uses of sin, and the final condition of man, which the author has undertaken to discuss, his book will be read with delight, we believe, by every candid person. It breathes throughout the spirit of a beautiful, thoughtful, discriminating and devout mind. The author has seen fit to call it "Illustrations of the Divine Government." And this expresses the character of the work. But its ultimate object, on which everything is made to bear, is to prove the doctrine of the final restoration of all mankind to virtue and happiness. We are inclined to believe that the premises on which he has constructed his most important argument are unsound, nor are we satisfied with the proofs he brings from Scripture. We do not assent to his conclusion. But we have read his work more than once

with delight. It is a truly Christian discussion. We do not know a book, which touches on controverted topics of theology, more deeply imbued with the spirit of unobtrusive candour. Nothing of harshness, much less of bigotry, has been suffered to breathe over its pages. We cannot resist the conviction that we have been communing with a truly benevolent and truth-loving mind. To read a book so written is as delightful as it is difficult to find one. The work is characterized by force and fulness of argument, and, at the same time, by great simplicity, and richness of illustration. We might make some beautiful extracts, especially from the chapters on the goodness of God; but as our limits do not permit us to make long quotations, and we cannot otherwise do justice to the author, we forbear.

J. Q. D.

Test of Christian Character. A Sermon by Peter Eaton, D. D. 8vo. pp. 16.

Jesus Christ would not have men to be even *Christians*, in any sectarian sense. By whatever name one might be called, whether Jew or Gentile, that man was acknowledged to be of his fold, if he was only a *good* man. The whole aim of his life, and the one sole purpose of his mission, were to make men *good*, — lovers of God, lovers of one another, pure. As to matters of doctrine, they were insisted upon solely as being subsidiary to this end, — helps, through the influence of which upon the mind a man might be made a good man.

We do feel glad when, once in a while, above the perpetual din about doctrines, our ears are permitted to hear, as in the Sermon before us, this, the main truth of our religion, earnestly set forth.

"*It is the life*," says Dr. Eaton, "*that stamps the character*. . . . . When I see an individual uniformly manifesting love and veneration for the Supreme Being, benevolence and charity to his neighbour, and all the moral virtues in his life, I ask not, What is his faith, or, What his experience."

No, nor does anybody who, from his reading of Christ's words, and the observation of his life, has been able to gather a glimpse of the errand on which he came. That such a man is a *Christian*, in the only proper sense of that term, is what Jesus laboured and died to make men, everyone, whose mind is not the utter slave of party, must and will at once admit. To set this truth clearly forth, and endeavour to make sectarians believe it, is the object of this Sermon. The reasoning is plain

and forcible, — we think no one can go through with it without pronouncing it satisfactory. We conclude with the expression of our thanks to Dr. Eaton for the strong common-sense view in which he has presented this all-important subject.

N.

CORRESPONDENCE AND INTELLIGENCE.

THE PRISON-DISCIPLINE SOCIETY.

This society has for its object the improvement of prisons and of all public criminal institutions throughout the country. Its intention is to introduce Christian principles into the articles of our criminal code, and provide for those convicted of their violation all the means of moral reformation.

This society has two modes of operation. One is, the collection of facts respecting the whole business of criminal imprisonment throughout the world. The other is, spreading those facts before magistrates, judges, philanthropists, and patriots, and inducing them to improve upon the experience and the invention of others.

According to the first mode of operation, it labours to obtain a general expression of opinion and a general communication of information, from benevolent men in England, Europe, and America, respecting the extent to which abuses now prevail, the remedies proposed, and as to what systems of prison-regulation have been found beneficial and availing. It was familiarly known that no two countries or states have the same systems. It was believed that every part of Christendom had something peculiar to itself, of good or of evil, in its police and its prisons. It was confidently expected that a general consideration of a scheme of prison-discipline successfully carried through in one place might bring about the second operation of the society and lead to its adoption elsewhere, and, ultimately, to benefits almost incalculable to humanity and the world. The collection of information of every kind about the whole subject, the preparation of plans of prison-discipline, the invention of new systems, the examination of criminal codes, the enlisting of public attention in the work, were considered matters of the first importance to the present time and to posterity.

The second mode of operation was of not less consequence. From the increase of population and of crime, institutions of this description are constantly in the process of erection all over the land, and are generally (and were uniformly, before this society began its operations) based on principles acknowledged to be false, injurious, and unchristian. This society aims, as far as possible, to reform the old establishments; but, at least, not to allow the erection of any new ones, in the face of facts which prove conclusively that, if erected as they used to be, they must become pests to society, and the instruments of utter degradation to those shut up in them.

This society desires to step in, wherever a jail or prison is about to be erected, and inform magistrates and men of authority what plans are successful, and what are not, neither can be. And they are disposed to think that, when it is demonstrated (to men who sit in high places, and are the servants of the people to say how the people's moneys shall be used) how, by a plan as old as Howard, much yearly expense may be saved, and governments spared the reproach of corrupting the imprisoned, and thereby injuring society and degrading human nature, such plan will be instantly adopted in preference to one expensive, corrupting, and cruel.

It is but a few years ago, a few years before the origin of the Prison-Discipline Society, that Leverett-Street jail was erected in Boston. And how did that enlightened city proceed in providing for the punishment of breaches of the law and the reformation of the criminal? Why, the first step was to put up such a building as should, by a little labour of its inhabitants, secure entire liberty of oral communication from room to room and story to story; that was attended to first. And second, that the apartments should be so large that many persons of different characters should be confined together, for purposes, no doubt, of mutual improvement. The number so united is sometimes six. The third thing was to preclude all possibility, at least all probability, of the industrious employment of time. And fourthly, by way of climax, to provide that the imparting of moral instruction should be impracticable, unavailing, and hopeless.

Thus solitary confinement, hard labour, and religious counsel, the three unfailing panaceas, are shut out from men and women who more than anybody in the community need these medicines for the soul! and, in spite of all that has been said on the subject, time and again, one fortieth part of the population of the place — including the emigrant just landed, the suspected boy, the persecuted debtor, the white-headed villain, and murderer awaiting trial — all are mixed together, in a common sentence of misery and degradation.

The Prison-Discipline Society, therefore, demands the support of every philanthropist, every patriot, and every Christian; because it has in view the entire eradication of such abuses of the purposes of justice, and the substitution, universally, of institutions which shall benefit the community, by taking from the vicious their proneness to vice, and erecting in its place an unchangeable purpose of purity, and an invincible steadfastness of obedience to duty and to God.

F. W. Holland.

SECOND LETTER TO THE REV. ADIN BALLOU.

Harvard, May 29, 1834.

Dear Sir,

It is with pleasure that I again address you, in reply to your letter; hoping, by my frequently writing now, to convince you more and more that my long silence has not been owing to a want of inclination, but to a lack of opportunity. I shall continue to speak to you plainly, and, I trust, respectfully and kindly; as one Christian friend should speak to another. My desire and aim are the glory of God, the prevalence of his truth, and the edification of his children.

You say, "It seems to be clear, either that the Restorationists are carrying things *too far*, or that their Unitarian brethren are not carrying them *far enough*. The time is at hand when this question must be decided."

My dear brother, you will not be surprised nor offended, when I frankly own to you, that it seems to me that the Restorationists are carrying things *too far*. To me they appear to go farther than the Scriptures authorize them to go. You say, "I am willing to concede that there are no passages of Scripture which declare, in so many unequivocal words, *All men will finally be restored to holiness and happiness*." You regard the doctrine as a "necessary *inference*." I have not supposed that it was necessary to draw such an inference from the instructions of the Bible. I think our time would be more wisely and profitably occupied if we attended to and insisted on those things, chiefly, which are clearly revealed to us in Scripture. When we pursue our inquiries beyond what is plainly written for our learning, we are apt to become dogmatical and sectarian, and to attach more importance to an opinion which has been the result of our own curious and refined speculation than to the obvious and simple doctrines of the gospel.

Christians in every age have been very prone to carry things *too far*. And a great deal of bitterness, strife, and division have been the consequences. Not contented with being disciples, they have aspired to be masters. Not satisfied with what is plain in the word of God, they have perplexed themselves and their brethren, and embroiled and rent the Church, and multiplied the enemies of religion, by attempting to pry into what is obscure and difficult. I grant that to desire to have a right understanding of the Scriptures is a laudable curiosity. But we must be aware that the Scriptures may suggest to us many inquiries to which they give no definite answer. It is so with other books—it is so with the book of nature. We should remember this, and check our curiosity when it is fixing our attention too deeply on things which are unimportant, or turning our thoughts away from things which are important. I suppose the gospel was designed to be a popular, a practical, a sanctifying, and a saving religion. The doctrines which it most concerns us to know, in order to our virtue, piety, and happiness, are few and simple, and are taught plainly and frequently.

I have thought that Unitarians, as a denomination, kept more strictly and closely on gospel ground than other denominations. You know the Orthodox charge them with not going far enough. We think we go as far as the Bible permits us, and that that is far enough. They who would have us receive the doctrines of the Trinity, native and total depravity, personal election, imputed righteousness, and imputed sin, etc., we think, would carry us too far. You, like us, reject these doctrines just mentioned. But then you would have us believe that all will be finally restored to holiness and happiness; and, consequently, that there will be another state of probation, or rather, another state of moral discipline, which will be successful in renovating, sanctifying, and saving all. We think these doctrines are neither expressly and directly taught in any particular passage of Scripture, nor with sufficient authority inferred from the general instruction of the New Testament. By making these, in our opinion, questionable points, distinguishing doctrines in your creed, you seem to us to carry things *too far;* to positively assert and frequently dwell on things, which the Scriptures but darkly hint at, or are quite silent about.

I mentioned the proneness of Christians in every age to go beyond the Scriptures. Unitarians have not been free from the same failing. Some of them have warmly advocated the Humanitarian scheme—some have warmly opposed it—some have zealously contended for the doctrine of philosophical necessity—some for materialism—some for the final restoration of all to holiness and happiness, etc.; as though these things were the most prominent and important. For my part, I could wish that these things could either be let alone, or handled with more moderation and prudence. Their tendency is to separate and bewilder us—to make religion too metaphysical and speculative to quicken the consciences and ex-

cite the piety of the learned, or to instruct the ignorant. The mind is busy in researches, in forming opinions, in drawing inferences, in inventing ingenious theories; and forgets to attend to the question, *What must I do to be saved?* Those, whose rare talents and great learning seem to point them out as guides and teachers to others, often leave the multitude as confused and darkened in their notions of religion as they found them. They exhibit the gospel to them in a form too subtile and refined to be intelligible and profitable to them. They tend rather to make men fond of debate, of subtile disquisitions, and of controversy, than penitent, humble, pious, and virtuous. I lament that there is so comparatively little attention paid to the moral and spiritual wants of mankind.

In my next letter, I intend to notice the passages of Scripture which you quote as proof of the doctrine that all will be finally restored to holiness and happiness. I would commence that subject now, were it not that some things occur to me which I am unwilling to omit or defer, and which will fill up the remaining page of this letter.

In many doctrines, I trust, we agree. We both receive the Scriptures as containing a revelation of the will of God to man—as our rule of faith and practice. We believe in the unity, power, wisdom, and goodness of God. We acknowledge Jesus to be the Christ, the Son of God, the Saviour of sinners, the Mediator between God and man. We both believe in a future state of retribution—that the good will be happy, and the wicked miserable while they continue to be wicked — that in order to be happy we must be holy. We both believe that the sinner must repent and reform, in order to be qualified for a heavenly state. I might proceed to mention many other things about which we entertain but little or no difference of opinion. Our disagreement is chiefly concerning a single doctrine. We agree that the sinful must become holy before they can be happy; and you say they all will become holy. We agree that the wicked will be punished or rendered miserable in proportion to their wickedness; our difference is in regard to the duration of their misery. You see we agree as to the *amount* of suffering, and differ as to the mode of it.—Perhaps you will say, Then why do you stand aloof from us, if our sentiments do in reality so nearly harmonize? It is because your form of the doctrine seems to us unscriptural. And why, my friend, need you make so much of a mode or form, which is not declared, in so many unequivocal words, in any passage of Scripture? How glad should I be, if, on serious and mature reflection, you should find you could conscientiously lay aside these distinctions, and combine and coöperate with us! United as one band of brothers, how much we could do to advance the cause of holiness and virtue, and to extend the influences of the gospel! While we are striving about these nice and difficult points, infidelity, atheism, and sin are all gaining ground. The ignorant remain without instruction, the young without a guide, the poor and afflicted without consolation. I am earnest for this union, not to swell the number of a party, not to insure us the mastery over an opposing sect, but to promote the moral and religious welfare of immortal beings. The Orthodox can do us but little harm, if we who call ourselves liberal are faithful to Christ. Multitudes are already disgusted with Orthodoxy in its various and shifting forms. They need to have the plain and practical doctrines impressed on their minds and on their hearts.

You are opposed to the Universalists. You think their peculiar opinions unscriptural, and injurious to the moral welfare of society. It has seemed to me that your insisting on the doctrine of a final restoration tended to increase the number of Universalists. At any rate, this, I believe, has often been the result, from the time of Origen till now. I think it of great importance that our attention should be fixed on those things which concern our peace and spiritual welfare. We have but little time to spend in curious speculations. We need it for other and nobler purposes. That God would grant us both that wisdom which will enable us to know the

way of truth and duty, and that strength which will enable us to walk in it, is the prayer of your friend and brother.

JONATHAN FARR.

A LETTER ON MORAL REFORM.

DEAR SIR,

Through your magazine I wish to lay before the public some plain thoughts on *Moral Reform*, together with a few of the facts which these thoughts rest upon. To many of your readers the term Moral Reform may be strange and without any very distinct sense. But I wish to use the phrase, as it is used now by a great many people, to mark the direct support given to the seventh commandment. In this use, to belong to a Moral-Reform Society and to be a Moral Reformer means making the vice of licentiousness a subject of consideration and action. To reclaim lewd men and women, and prevent others from becoming so, and save society from a desolation like that which was sent upon the ancient cities of the plain, is the business of Moral Reform, and of all those good men and true who are putting their hands to this new enterprise.

And now I ask, Can any man say why this subject should not be discussed, written upon, preached about, and made the object of associations, male and female? Does it not concern every father and mother to know, as near as can be known, what are the temptations whereunto their sons and daughters are exposed? Is any man putting forth the first-born son of his hopes to bustle among the crowds of a city, and will he not thank you and me could we say to him, "Here is a pitfall by the very wayside, and your son is carelessly passing by it, and will have to pass by it, at the risk of life, day after day and night upon night, so long as he remains here"? Still more, if this sin lieth in wait in the country as well as the city, will not the parent be thankful to those who speak right out about the matter, and tell the whole truth and let him know the worst, even if that should go to show that, in the peaceful village, where a perpetual Sabbath seems to reign in every heart, — that, even there, this temptation is busy with tremendous effect, and has a mighty power to blast the counsels of wisdom, and overthrow the very commands of revelation itself? Was not every father and every mother thankful to those men who forewarned them against the dangerous and subtle sin of drunkenness? And is not this other sin more dangerous and more subtle, as I know it is more destructive, than intemperance?

Heaven forbid I should exaggerate, by a hair's breadth, the amount of this vice! but it can, I honestly think, be shown, to the entire satisfaction of every candid person, — First, that the vice which caused the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrha is increasing rapidly upon us, and is now in a most alarming condition; — Second, that this vice is, above all other vices, treacherous and insinuating, "bringing butter in a lordly dish," as Jael did to Sisera; — Third, that by the attention and united effort of wise and Christian men the vice can be restrained and in some measure put down.

And I wish to invite the readers of "The Unitarian" to some consideration of the subject of Moral Reform, so far as I shall be able to treat it in subsequent Numbers.

H.